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‘A novel, spicy delicacy’: tamales, advertising, and late 19th-century imaginative geographies of Mexico

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This article explores how the tamale entered the national market as a mass-produced foodstuff at the end of 19th century. Closely reading advertising images, the article examines how the Armour Packing Company placed their chicken tamale in relation to imaginative geographies of Mexico from this era. Through tracing the symbolic transformations of the tamale from its existence in the street life of the late 19th century US to the nation-wide advertising campaign initiated by the Armour Packing Company in 1898, this article will highlight some of the shifting meanings of the tamale as seen in American travel literature, novels, and popular magazines of the time. That the marketing and symbolic transformation of the tamale in advertising coincide with the escalation and development of the Spanish-American War, American imperialism, and changing notions of race and place in this era has particular implication for the geographies of knowledge associated with ethnic foods and has wider import for the construction of race, identity, and difference at the close of 19th century.

Keywords: advertising • food • imperialism • imaginative geography • Spanish–American War

Introduction

In 1913, *Armco*, the internal advertising circular for Armour and Company, printed the following order from L.S. Cook, a drugstore owner in Momence, Illinois:

Can of glycerine.
‘Helmet’ violin strings.
‘Star’ ham and bacons.
Cheese.
Sardines.
‘Veribest’ pork and beans.
‘Veribest’ chicken tamale.
Chili con carne.
Spaghetti.
Luncheon sausage.

What interested the magazine was the Armour salesman’s ability to sell a variety of merchandise at a single location, rather than promote any particular Armour Company product or product line.¹ The article informs the reader: ‘ ‘Helmet’ Strings and Sardines do not seem

ordinary companions, but they go well together in the store of Mr. Cook, as his is a drug store in which he has a section for serving hot drinks and dainty lunches'.² The article goes on to explain that the Momence drug store carried several types of Armour products, from foodstuffs, soap, to soda fountain supplies – a range of items that demonstrate the comprehensive nature of Armour and Company products in the early years of the 20th century.³ In the case of the small, midwestern town of Momence, Armour and Company products figured heavily into its inventory.⁴

The *Armco* magazine article on Cook's drug store in small-town America is merely a small point attesting to the presence and popularity of Armour and Company foodstuffs and products in the early years of the 20th century. From the above order, it can be assumed that the general public saw these products at their local drug store and lunch counter. Just as importantly, these same consumers were exposed to advertisements for Armour's chicken tamale in widely-circulating popular magazines, such as *Scribner's* and the *Ladies' home journal*, as early as 1898.

What this article uncovers are some of the attitudes surrounding Mexico and the tamale as they inhere in early advertisements by Armour and Company at a time when the company



FIGURE 1 'Novel Mexican delicacy'. Featuring a man and woman of the Mexican peasantry, this advertisement for the Armour Packing Company chicken tamale was the earliest and most widely used image. From the *Ladies' home journal*, September through December 1898. Original size 5.72 × 4.45 cm. Also in *Scribner's*, December 1898 and January 1899. Original size 6.35 × 5.08 cm.

sought to develop and place their product on a national level. This appearance and marketing of the tamale as an ethnic food takes place at a crucial juncture in American history, during a time of increasing articulation of American imperial identity that specifically relates to popular conceptions of Mexico, Spain, and more generally, the territories of the former Spanish empire in the time surrounding the Spanish-American War. In short, the 1898 advertising images of Armour and Company provide an early and important example of how bourgeois domesticity and consumerism are enlisted and intimately intertwined with the project of American empire. Representing an important intersection between the mundane and domestic realm, and the geopolitical and imperial, these ads introduced the tamale to a broad American market in 1898. That they also served to make the tamale a suitable item for drug store and lunch counter consumption in a small, midwestern town like Momence, Illinois nearly two decades later speaks to the compelling characterizations of cultural and racial difference that coalesce in the advertising of ethnic foods.

Advertising images are of particular interest because they sought to instruct and inform consumers not only about what to think of the tamale, but also constructed imaginative



FIGURE 2 'Novel Mexican delicacy'. Although identical in terms of copy to the December ad, this advertisement replaced the image of Mexican peasants with a scene of an American woman and Mexican at a beachside house. From the *Ladies' home journal*, March 1899. Original size 5.72 × 4.45 cm.

geographies of the tamale concerning its production and distribution and the contexts of its consumption.⁵ By examining advertising techniques regarding Mexico and the tamale, this article reveals – at least in part – some of the rhetorical constructions and imperial geographies that constituted to Armour's advertising campaign. What is of interest here, then, is how Armour's chicken tamale ads negotiate the tensions of American imperial identity and racial difference in a heightened environment of war and imperial expansion – a tension that draws upon older discourses of imperialism but also introduces new, somewhat contradictory, elements based around an idea of 'cosmopolitan' consumerism that, at once, desires the foreign yet holds it in contradistinction.⁶ It is the interplay of these tensions that demonstrate how advertising and ethnic foods, however mundane, nevertheless reflect and promote ideas of empire in which the concept of place, geography, and race are crucial parts.

The article first explores some of the ways in which the tamale is represented in advertisements, in image and text. What follows is a comparison between the social history of the tamale in Mexico and its representations in the United States during the same time period. To seek to compare imaginative geographies of the tamale with the tamale's social history is not to suggest that either is more 'authentic': rather both social history and imaginative geographies inform my readings and interpretations, but for purposes of space and clarity, I will



FIGURE 3 'A rare dainty'. Featuring different ad copy, this advertisement for the Armour Packing Company chicken tamale shows a Mexican man in a sombrero, serape, and chaps purchasing a tamale in an open-air marketplace. From the *Ladies' home journal*, April 1899. Original size 5.72 × 4.45 cm.

discuss only certain aspects of the tamale's social history in Mexico and the US, and choose instead to concentrate on imaginative geographies and literary representations from the era. Lastly, the article then draws together several lines of inquiry concerning race and advertising and relates them to the development of American imperialism at the close of 19th century, exploring how ethnic food and imaginative geographies of Mexico serve to demarcate imperial and national American identity at the close of the Spanish-American War. Overall, the article can be viewed as a blending of perspectives and approaches that combines the close reading of advertising images with the vital contextualization provided by social history. This approach does justice to the many types of meanings that inhere in a complex subject like food and foodways, and acts, at least in part, to illuminate how the tamale resonates in American culture and advertising at the close of the 19th century.

Historical background

The advertising of Armour's chicken tamale in magazines like the *Ladies' home journal* and *Scribner's* in 1898–1899 took place in a cultural and political milieu that was sensitized to opinions regarding Spain and its colonies through the rhetoric of the Spanish-American War. To briefly encapsulate the historical background here, when readers saw their first Armour tamale ad in early April 1898, popular opinion and political action was mounting against Spain (Figure 1). The sinking of the U.S.S. *Maine* happened two months before, and the *New York journal* was preparing its million-copy run calling for immediate US entry into the war in Cuba. By the end of the month, war was declared. This first tamale ad ran for a total of nine months in the *Ladies home journal* – a time in which American military forces gained control of Manila, the island of Cuba, and Puerto Rico. When readers saw the remaining two tamale ads nearly a year later, the Spanish-American War had been officially concluded for three months, and the United States claimed possession over Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines (Figures 2 and 3).⁷

The relationship between the Armour chicken tamale ads and American imperial identity is subtle and complex. As other authors have demonstrated, American imperialist concern over Mexico and the Spanish empire existed well before the Spanish-American War, stretching back some 50 years prior to the Mexican-American War and the acquisition of the southwestern territories and California.⁸ What makes the Armour chicken tamale ads interesting from a scholarly standpoint, however, is the fact that these particular ads inaugurate a series of Armour ads in which race, place, and empire play a significant part. Readers could expect to view multiple ads for a range of Armour products in a single magazine issue, and the ads that accompanied Armour's Chicken Tamale advertising used images that evoked military power and conquest. Ads for products as varied as pork and beans, mince meat, and extract of beef depicted boys in sailor suits, promoted US Army and Navy calendars, and offered free linen fans decorated with racial caricatures of the inhabitants of US territories like Alaska, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines (Figures 4 and 5).⁹ When viewed as part of this series, the Armour Chicken Tamale ads are intriguing because they are neither militarized images, as in the case of the boys in sailor suits or US military calendars, nor are they racial caricatures, as in the case of the linen fans. In their attempt to represent Mexico and 'authentic' Mexican experience, Armour Chicken



FIGURE 4 Armour Pork and Beans. This advertisement offered a series of six different linen fans showing caricatures of the inhabitants of the U.S., Alaska, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, and Cuba (shown *left to right*). The reverse side of the fans depicted each region's native flower. From the *Ladies' home journal*, June 1899. Original size 5.72 × 8.26 cm.



Armour's
Extract of BEEF

"Has that rich, beefy flavor"

For making Soups, Gravies and Beef Tea.
Aids results attainable in no other way.

Armour's Army and Navy Art Calendar for 1899
now ready for distribution, consists of six 10x12 sheets, artistically printed in twelve colors on fine art paper, bound with red, white and blue ribbon. The original sketches were painted from life this year, and most beautifully bring out the sentimental side of Military Life. The illustrations here printed show their composition and treatment. We have 500,000, but with ten million American Ladies, and all wanting one, they will not last long. We advise your early request. Send six 2-cent stamps to cover mailing and postage.

ARMOUR & COMPANY, CHICAGO



FIGURE 5 Armour's extract of beef. A calendar depicting the 'sentimental side of military life' was offered for the year 1899. The calendar had six art images. From the *Ladies' home journal*, November 1898. Original size 8.26 × 5.72 cm.

Tamale ads show an interest in objective truth – the real, the authentic – that is absent in ads depicting racial and cultural caricatures, yet they nonetheless draw upon imperial and racial discourses of the late 19th century. More subtle than racial caricature, more oblique in political content than militarized images, the Armour Chicken Tamale ads offer a unique perspective as to how deceptively neutral and mundane images of place nonetheless draw upon and contribute to asymmetrical relations of race and imperial power. More importantly, these ads not only demonstrate how racist and imperialist ideations are present in everyday images, they also demonstrate how advertising attempts to remake imperialist discourses into positive consumer experience.

Representations of the tamale: Mexico and the United States

Before turning to the imaginative geographies of the Armour ads, it is important to contextualize the tamale in a social history of Mexico. As Jeffrey Pilcher has established in his work on Mexican food and identity, foodstuffs typically considered ‘Mexican’ by modern day standards – tortillas, tamales, frijoles, enchiladas – were negatively associated with the lower classes in Mexico until the 1940s. Only in the decades following the Revolution were concepts of national identity reformulated to include indigenous and mestizo elements like the indigenous ‘ethnic’ foods listed above.¹⁰

Before the revolution, however, mestizo foods were not considered representative of Mexican national identity, with the upper and middle classes emphasizing European heritage and an interest in French continental cooking and dining. In this respect, upper and middle classes of Mexico were much like their American and European counterparts at the close of the 19th century, which favored large, multi-course meals based on French provincial cooking.¹¹

The implications for mestizo food such as the tamale, then, in this milieu were clear: it was lower class and not acceptable for middle or upper class daily (or public) consumption. As Pilcher has shown, the idea of taint from lower class food was twofold: moral taint from lower class association through food choices; and potential physical taint from the conditions under which the tamale was made and sold in the marketplaces and streets of Mexico. One particularly telling example is of a 1915 Mexican novel in which an upper class woman’s unseemly desire for tamales prefigures the development of other illicit desires, such as an adulterous affair and unexpected death.¹²

Representations of the tamale in the US, however, have a somewhat different character – at least in how the tamale appears in novels and popular magazines during this time period. Like Mexico, the tamale was seen as a street food: areas as far-flung as Montana, as well as the former Mexican territories of the southwest and northern California, possessed tamale vendors.¹³ In novels such as Jack London’s 1907 *The iron heel* and Rollin Hartt’s 1898 article on Montana, the tamale is an affordable street food.¹⁴ In other novels, like *The Californians* (1898) and *McTeague* (1899), tamale vendors are in the bustling working class shopping districts, where store owners live above their shops and where middle and upper class patrons (or their servants) shop during the day for meats and vegetables.¹⁵

Unlike the reputation of the tamale in Mexico, however, the tamale was not disparaged as potentially dangerous lower class food in a sampling of American novels and magazines from this era. Harby's 1890 article, entitled 'Texan Types and Contrasts', notes the eclectic population and tastes of the state:

The old Dutch masters would have loved to perpetuate the interior of a Mexican restaurant, its patrons showing the cosmopolitan nature of the population.... A long, low-roofed room, with bare floor, an uncovered pine table, and hard bench on which sit three noted politicians taking an evening lunch.... One is fair-skinned and ruddy-haired, as befits his Irish blood; one a typical American; the third a French Canadian. Each has a steaming platter of *chile con carne* before him, and a plate of *tamales* in their hot, moist wrappings of shuck.¹⁶

White, European men – politicians in the public eye – have no qualms about eating Mexican food in public, which suggests there is no upper class social stigma attached to the food in southwestern American culture, unlike Mexico at this time.¹⁷ In *McTeague*, Frank Norris's novel about the downfall of an American dentist in San Francisco, tamales are bought from street vendors on special occasions or nights out on the town like celebrating an engagement, attending the theatre, or meeting friends on the nightly promenade.¹⁸ In London's 1913 novel *The valley of the moon*, tamales are part of a midday meal eaten by the white, American protagonists. Later in the novel, a West Oakland restaurant, named 'Tony's Tamale Grotto', is recalled for being a popular spot with young American working class men and women.¹⁹

The tamale's acceptability beyond the working classes is suggested in Chopin's 1899 novel *The awakening*. Adele Ratignolle, the wife of a wealthy pharmacy owner staying at the exclusive summer resort of Grand Isle, tells a dinner story about a Mexican tamale maker from New Orleans who killed his wife. Adele speaks of the man's skill, humble demeanor, and tamale-making business. The man's unpredictable passion and violence leads her to condemn the Mexicans as a race: but it is not – unlike the novel cited by Pilcher – an implied result of dangerous or tainted food. In spite of Adele's distrust of Mexicans, the tamales – she claims – are 'excellent'.²⁰

Another interesting element that emerges in these novels and magazine articles is the fact that the tamale is not viewed as part of an exclusively 'ethnic' food experience: the couples in *McTeague* (American and German-American) patronize a German bar, eating a variety of foods (tamales, German sausages, salad) and drinks as they watch the people stroll by on their evening promenade.²¹ Similarly, in Rollin Hartt's article on life in Montana circa 1898, the man who sells tamales also sells American hot lunch and German sausage, walking through the pre-dawn streets calling: 'Hot tamales! Red-hot tamales! Hot lunch and weiner-wurst! Chickie tamales!'.²² This differs from Jon May's study of contemporary British diners who frequent ethnic restaurants as a form of culinary tourism and class differentiation.²³ The eating habits of the characters in the novels appears to be more in line with eclectic, daily food choices of consumers, or what Cook and Crang term the 'displaced' yet locally constructed knowledges of ethnic foods.²⁴

In literary representations of former Spanish territories the tamale emerges as a feature of western American life from the restaurants of Texas, north to the streets of San Francisco, and east to the former Spanish holding of New Orleans. According to Hartt's 1898 article, the presence of the tamale in Montana was part of the 'cattle trail' – the movement of cowboys, cattle, and people throughout the western grazing lands and cattle markets of the

American west.²⁵ More eastern American populations may have been familiarized with Mexican foods in the streets of Chicago – another cattle and meat packing town. The tortilla machine was patented in Chicago in the late 19th century, suggesting a resident Mexican-American population or at the very least, a ready market for Mexican food.²⁶

Despite the variety of ways the tamale may have entered Anglo-American diets, the tamale's social history in Mexico, as well as its literary representations in the United States, differ considerably from the tamale's rhetorical construction in the Armour ads of 1898. Unlike the tamale in the street life of Mexico, or as it appears in the street life of American novels and magazines, the tamale of the Armour ads is decidedly not working or lower class. It is marketed as an enticing and exclusive foodstuff found at – in the words of the April 1899 ad – 'fancy' grocery stores (Figure 3). This symbolic transformation of the tamale from a food of the "lower orders" to one suitable for bourgeois consumption seems to have taken place – at least in the Armour ads – several decades prior to a similar transformation in Mexico.²⁷

Imaginative geographies: Mexico and the tamale

Returning to the Armour ads, the ad copy distances the tamale from its social background as a lower and working class street food in Mexico and the United States. At the same time, however, it maintains the tamale's connection to its geographic origins of Mexico. Decontextualized from its social history in terms of class, the tamale's origins and its place as a 'foreign' food remain intact. In fact, it is this very foreignness that defines its desirability. For these reasons, the imaginative geographies involved in the production of the Armour chicken tamale deserve further consideration.

Nostalgia and the pastoral

Looking more closely at the ad images, the earliest and longest running ad shows a scene between a Mexican man and woman (Figure 1). Both are dressed in the loose, white cotton clothing of the rural Mexican peasantry.²⁸ The woman leans over a balcony, handing a man on horseback a tamale. It is a quaint moment between a Mexican couple, evoking the simple and happy life of the lower orders and an idealized image of the Mexican rural life (Figure 1). This ad relies upon two well-established discourses of imperialism: the pastoral and what Rosaldo terms 'imperialist nostalgia'.²⁹

The first of these discourses – the pastoral – places the image of the Other in anachronistic time or the distant past – objectifying its timeless, innocent qualities, yet placing it in contradistinction to modern, urban, and 'civilized' life.³⁰ The second discourse – what Rosaldo describes as 'imperialist nostalgia' – is another type of objectification of the Other. Like the use of the pastoral, imperialist nostalgia objectifies and admires what is viewed as a past way of life. A subtle difference from the pastoral, however, is that this past way of life is a *dying* way of life: an erosion of essential and unique qualities, witnessed by those who seek to bring change. It is an ongoing loss and sense of mourning – experienced not by those who live in the society in question – but a nostalgia that haunts the imperial players who bring about the destruction of this 'untouched' society and consequently, the very qualities they admire.³¹

Using Williams and Rosaldo as a starting point, several points can be made about the ad upon closer examination. The first, and perhaps the most significant, is that the man and woman are dressed in the clothing of the rural Mexican peasantry. But apart from an understanding that this couple is of the lower social orders in Mexico is another less obvious fact. Given the Spanish architecture of the house (Mexican peasants typically live in small, adobe dwellings), the scene most likely shows an exchange of food between servants.³² Dressed in the clothing of the lower classes and shown associated with a Spanish-style house, the imagined geography of the ad constructs a pastoral scene in which the land is not only inscribed with notions of agriculture and subsistence, but also servitude. Linked to the *ranchos* or *haciendas* of Mexico, the ad shows a happy peasant couple, but they are bound to the land as well as its masters.

The question of *who* are the masters is a point that is blurred by the nature of advertising itself. Historically, the role of master in Mexico was taken by Spanish or after independence, the upper classes of Mexican society, typically of Spanish European descent.³³ However, in the case of advertising – and more specifically – the Armour ad, this historical attribution of master-servant relationship is questionable. The most salient point of the ad is not an implied, historic understanding of Spanish or Spanish creole rule. Rather, the ad models a more general sense of rule and colonial relations. The use of the pastoral in the ad evokes an idealized rural existence divorced from questions of racial legitimization, class struggle, legal status, and property rights. In short, the ad constructs an image of rural life that is distinctly de-politicized and made innocent from the *consequences* of rule, inequality, and subjugation. Issues of servitude and rule inhere in the ad, but the advertisement shows happy peasants, smiling and content in their subjugation. This imaginative geography of Mexico is significant to the construction of American imperial identity.

Although superficially modeling the Mexico of 1898, the scene in the advertisement evokes two events in United States history: the annexation of California in 1848, following the Mexican-American War; and the events of the 1898 Spanish-American War, in which the former Spanish territories of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines were acquired from Spain. In each case, citizens under former Spanish rule were acquired by the United States, and as historians have shown, this process of assimilation was neither peaceful nor without consequence to the newly incorporated American citizens of Mexican and Spanish descent in California, the Southwest, and Puerto Rico.³⁴

Viewed in the light of American military victory over Spain and her former colonies, the pastoral acts as both a lens and frame – a lens collapsing time and distance, allowing the reader a privileged view into an idealized rural existence in which issues of class, race, and citizenship are subsumed; and an imaginative frame that presents the wars of 1848 and 1898 not as separate events but as the inevitable continuity of America's republican efforts against Spain and her empire. Questions of rule and colonial relations as absolute geography or geographic fact are not as significant as the imaginative geographies the advertisement constructs of Mexico and a majority of its people: a rural, happy peasantry that is timeless, traditional, and decidedly rooted in the past. This is an image evoked by Helen Sanborn in the concluding pages of her 1886 travel account of Mexico: 'We had left behind a people as unlike ourselves as is their country; a people just waking up from their dream of the past to take their place in the progress of to-day'.³⁵ A country simple and half-awake, this imaginative geography of Mexico derives meaning in contrast to and through the vantage point of American or

European culture. The implication being that Mexican society – and by extension its peoples – need to be brought into the modern, civilized world.

Privilege, romance, and leisure

The second ad depicts a Mexican man of the upper classes standing beside a woman dressed in European fashion reclining in a hammock (Figure 2).³⁶ The Mexican gentleman serves the woman food, doffing his sombrero in polite regard; the woman graciously accepts the tamale with a smile. The leisurely and luxurious setting evokes the romance and charm of Mexico, as does the man's elegant Spanish dress and courtly manners. From the wooden floorboards and railing in the middle distance, it can be seen that the woman and her companion are on a veranda. In the far distance, yachts and sailboats are anchored in a bay.

The hammock, veranda, and ocean with yachts suggest a beach house set in a warm, southern clime. The illustration manages to convey some of the lushness: yachts lie anchored in the water; the beach in the distance; the wide veranda and hammock suggesting the architecture of the tropics and semi-tropics that seeks to take advantage of small breezes in hot, still summers. It is an image of a 'pleasant retreat' that the Armour ad evokes.

Given this basic description, the question remains: what are the possible meanings of a Mexican man offering a woman in European-style dress a tamale? The role reversal of a man serving a woman food suggests either a mistress-servant relationship or the courtly solicitude of old world manners between social equals or, possibly, sweethearts. The setting and ad copy suggest that the scene takes place in Mexico. More precisely, the exchange of food takes place at a well-appointed beach house. Not only is the relationship between the man and woman cause for question but also the setting: how does a beach house in Mexico affect the relationship between the Mexican man and the woman? In other words, what imaginative geographies of Mexico give meaning to and structure the relationship between a Mexican man, a fashionably-dressed woman, and the oceanside landscape of Mexico?

If the house is an upper class oceanside retreat, the clothing of the couple suggests upper class occupants. The woman is wearing European-style fashions of the era: a fitted shirt-waist, corset, and belted flowing skirt.³⁷ Her hair is worn in a high chignon (the outline of the bun can be seen against the hammock). She is lighter-skinned, suggesting she is either of upper-class Spanish descent or as her clothing and hairstyle intimate, possibly, an American woman. Regardless of her nationality, the combination of her coloring, her clothing, and the beach house setting marks her as upper-class.

The black suit, serape, and white dress shirt of the man also place him squarely within the upper, ruling classes of Mexico. The 1886 account of Helen Sanborn's travels, *A winter in central America and Mexico*, details a gentleman's outfit:

A sombrero of drab felt, with an enormously wide brim and a rich trimming with of silver; a jacket and vest of spotless white, elaborately embroidered; and trousers of fine black cloth, with rows of silver buttons on the seam from top to bottom.³⁸

The clothing and manners of the upper class Mexican (more precisely, Spanish creole) gentleman convey an overall effect of refinement. Townsend writes: 'No matter how unexpectedly

one arrives at these haciendas in Mexico he finds the proprietor or the *administrator* not only always the gentleman in speech and manner but also the gentleman in dress.... The *hacendado* is always neat, even to elegance, and his hospitality is only surpassed by his courtesy'.³⁹ Fanny Chambers Gooch, writing at the same time in *Face to Face with the Mexicans* elaborates:

It has been said that the gallantry of these caballeros is rather wearisome and tedious, but I scarcely imagine that any lady of refinement could feel herself otherwise than honored at being the recipient of their courtly attentions....One feels as if transported to the days of chivalry.⁴⁰

It is precisely this 'natural' chivalry and attention given to women that establishes the romance of the *caballero* and Mexico, and, consequently, the evocation of the romance and courtliness in this particular ad.

Romance, elegant manners, and an idyllic oceanside retreat – all hallmarks of 'civilization' and leisurely life – may seem to be free of imperialistic and colonial connotations. However, Pratt has astutely noted that romantic relationships in colonial settings often 'unfold in some marginal or privileged space where the relations of labor and property are suspended'.⁴¹ Economically marginal, the oceanside retreat of the ad is also removed politically and geographically from the widely peasant-based and agrarian economy of pre-revolutionary Mexico. Love and romance elide questions of local economies and hierarchies of economic and political power. Whether the woman is upper-class Mexican or American, the ad suggests peace, retreat, and elegance – a home in which the power of love, as opposed to political and economic power, rules.

If the woman is interpreted as a white American, however, a more nuanced argument can be made in relation to imperialism. As Pratt has pointed out, cross-racial romance holds a particular place within the rhetorical strategies of imperialism. She classifies cross-racial romance as a type of 'anti-conquest' or discursive strategy that guarantees the innocence of white Europeans in the imperial conquest. Romance, according to Pratt, guarantees innocence because 'romantic love ... understands itself as reciprocal'; in other words, relationships based on romance and love take place between two willing, loving parties.⁴² Although Pratt is writing about relationships between white men and native women, she makes some important points about cross-racial love within colonial society. She writes:

It is easy to see transracial love plots as imaginings in which European supremacy is guaranteed by affective and social bonding; in which sex replaces slavery as the way others are seen to belong to the white man; in which romantic love rather than filial servitude or force guarantee the wilful submission of the colonized.... The allegory of romantic love mystifies exploitation out of the picture.⁴³

Romantic love as a strategy of anti-conquest, of course, only rhetorically guarantees white European innocence; colonial exploitation remains a fact. Even in situations of love, the colonial hierarchy is present, and whiteness is guaranteed legally, culturally, and racially supreme. The sharing of a tamale, then, may be a gesture of affection between two people bound by love – American and Mexican – but as Pratt points out, it is a bond between social and racial unequals; the native *servant of love* is rendered merely *servant* within the colonial hierarchy.⁴⁴ Love is mystified out of the picture. What remains are service and deference, the manners and aristocracy of the Old World serving the New World – the American woman. In this reading, the advertisement reproduces the racial hierarchy of colonialism with a foreign man

serving a white, American woman. Whether lover or servant, the American woman is presented as a worthy object of regard not only for American men, but also for men of other nations and races: privilege and respect are the most noticeable characteristics of the ad.

Regardless of the woman's nationality – whether she is Spanish creole or American – class and European descent plays the supreme role in each interpretation of the ad. Whatever dangers an upper class woman of European heritage may have experienced in late 19th-century Mexico, the ad counters: idealized domestic space is also idealized colonial space. Within the frame of the ad, the dangers, questions, and contradictions of political and economic imperialism are subsumed by intimations of European racial, economic, and political superiority. The imaginative geography of Mexico that remains is one of romance and leisure, as well as the pleasure of warm climates and peoples. The danger of the tropics, political and social unrest, and the consequences of American imperialism and Spanish colonial legacy are resolved and contained through more conventional images of colonial conquest in the tropics: pleasure, luxury, and European privilege.

'Color' and service

The third and final ad shows a Mexican street scene (Figure 3). A man in a sombrero, serape, and chaps is shown standing at a counter, where a woman smiles at him. A large platter of food sits on the counter, with a smaller platter behind it. The man casts a foreshortened shadow upon the ground, and his profile remains shadowed under his sombrero. The deep shadows and the *portales* arching behind woman indicate an open-air setting – more specifically, an open-air market in an arcaded plaza.⁴⁵

Like the other two tamale ads, the copy suggests the scene takes place in 'sunny old' Mexico. Unlike the images of the beach-house or peasant couple, however, the advertisement does not depict a private, domestic moment. The ad, instead, shows a public scene – a scene in which a Mexican man purchases, or is about to purchase, food from a female tamale vendor. Notions of public life, economic transaction, and racial hierarchy coalesce in this third ad, and two powerful iconic images of race in the American imagination are present: the black female cook and the Mexican cowboy, or *vaquero*. Each character has important implications for American imperial identity and its imaginative geographies of Mexico – the black female cook in ideas of servitude and the *vaquero* in romantic imaginings of the West and the 'wild frontier'.

Turning to the ad itself, it can be seen that the female street vendor is more darkly colored than any other characters in Armour's tamale ads (Figures 1–3). With a kerchief tied in a knot upon her head and a wide smile, the woman resembles the black 'mammy' characters that gained popularity in advertisements in the early years of the 20th century.⁴⁶ I have chosen to designate the female food vendor as black, given her clothes, coloring, and smile, but this particular choice is not without its problems. Unlike Deck's study of black, female cooks in advertising, which surveyed a slightly later time period, there is only a single image of an adult black woman in *Scribner's* for the year 1899 and no such images in the *Ladies' home journal*, apart from Figure 3.⁴⁷ Because other Armour ads show relatively uncommon racialized characters, such as Mexicans, Cubans, and inhabitants of the Philippines, choosing to race the woman as black is not overly imaginative. In fact, it is the very uniqueness and early

appearance of these ads that make them so important for the construction of otherness and racial difference in the imperial and geographical imagination.

Following Deck's argument, the image of the female black cook, at its most basic level, reinforced ideas of racial hierarchy and played upon whites' desires for black servants. However, as Deck points out, the white desire for the black female body was rooted in deeper psychological needs than mere servitude: more than mere sexual desire or want, whites turned to black women to satisfy their physical, 'sensorial' needs.⁴⁸ For women, the mythic 'mammy' character satisfied bodily 'sensorial' needs through her care-giving role, her generosity and willingness to feed others, and later in life, her tutelage in the kitchen. For men, 'Mammy' fulfilled similar needs and, perhaps more obviously, also fulfilled the 'sensorial' need for sex.⁴⁹ For Deck, the image of the black female servant acts as a fetish for whites, an object of irrational worship and attention that fulfills both bodily hungers and deep-rooted psychological desires to be catered to and nurtured by one who remains subservient.

In the Armour ad, the figure of the black female food vendor participates in the same constellation of associations. She is much more than the 'happy servant', and in several important respects she differs from the smiling peasants of the earliest Armour Chicken Tamale ad (Figure 1). Whereas the figures of the cheerful, Mexican peasants brought to mind rural servitude grounded in notions of well-tended fields and productive agriculture, the body of the black servant connotes a different type of service and servitude. In many ways, image of the black servant is never entirely free of the connotation of once being considered saleable goods by Europeans, and the body itself is remembered as chattel.

The idea of salability as it relates to the black female body is especially salient in this particular ad, since it is the only Armour ad in which money is implied. Unlike the other ads, the relationship between the Mexican man and the black female cook is not based on the privileges of luxury (Figure 2) or the shared bonds of rural peasantry (Figure 1): it is based on money, ideas of economic exchange, and public transaction. As earlier excerpts from novels have illustrated, *The awakening* in particular, there is an association of public 'taint' or unseemliness with the street vendor in the middle class imagination: the food is appetizing but the social lives and race of the vendors are not. Marginalized by race, the exchange of money, and by participation in the public life of the street, the image of the black female cook functions in a very different way than the characters in the other tamale ads (Figure 3). Whereas the other ads depict private, domestic scenes, this ad shows a street scene. Where in the other ads, notions of subservience are more subtle, the black 'mammy' character provides an instant and immediate understanding of race, racial hierarchy, and servitude. That money is received for her services is particularly telling in two respects: first, a link is created between the salability of the black female body and what it produces. Secondly, there is the implication that the black body is never entirely free from the taint of money, public visibility, and economic transaction. Notions of blackness, public life, and money distance the character of the black 'mammy' from the social acceptability of middle class life, yet her figure remains a powerful icon of race and servitude in the white imagination, particularly when associated with images of food.

Ideas of racial hierarchy, white dominance, and European power also are intertwined with the other character in the ad – the Mexican cowboy, or vaquero. If the black 'mammy' figure reassures white readers of being nurtured and cared for by one who is subservient, then the

figure of the vaquero unsettles this feeling of comfort and safety. Like the black 'mammy' figure, the vaquero is a powerful symbol in the American imagination but rather than a symbol associated with subservience and comfort, he is an iconic figure of the West and the 'wild frontier'. Looking at the tamale ad, the figure of vaquero could have easily been drawn from any dime novel of the era: a lone man, his face shadowed, approaches a counter to purchase food. Dressed in a wide sombrero with a riding outfit of chaps, short jacket, and serape the vaquero is a liminal character, sometimes trustworthy despite his appearance, and other times, as dangerous as his looks suggest.⁵⁰ More often than not, as Keller and Stanfield in their respective film studies suggest, the Mexican horseman functions as a villain or other type of 'badman'.⁵¹ Negative stereotypes associated with the Mexican in the white mind were firmly in place in dime novels like *Little lone star* (1886), in early films (*Fights of nations* 1907), and 19th century travel accounts, so much so that Helen Sanborn, a Wellesley graduate traveling in Mexico in the 1880s could write: 'All the bad that has been said about Mexicans and Spaniards we could easily believe when we walked on the street and looked into the villainous faces of those we met – faces enough to make one shudder, whereon the word desperado was plainly written'.⁵² Whether a bandit, 'desperado', or vaquero, this image of the Mexican horseman as 'half-soldier, half-bandit' draws upon a group of associations that unsettles the viewer through its intimations of danger and ideas of the untamed, romantic West.⁵³ As a stock character in dime novels and early western genre films, the Mexican vaquero was a necessary foil and contrast to the central figure of the Western frontier in the American mind: the white, American cowboy.⁵⁴ This image of the 'Wild West' combines in the April 1899 Armour Chicken Tamale ad to create a third imaginative geography of Mexico: a romantic, unsettled place of danger – a country of shadows and contrasts awaiting American justice.

Images of the Western frontier, or the 'frontier' as a general concept, were linked with the discourses of US imperialism in the writings and actions of Theodore Roosevelt and William F. Cody's 'Wild West' show. This has particular import for the time of the Spanish-American War, most obviously in the figure of Roosevelt but also, as Richard Slotkin has pointed out, in a pattern of associations that combined ideas of the 'frontier', American civilization, and conquest in both Roosevelt's and Cody's work and attitudes.⁵⁵ Drawing from Slotkin's argument, I will make only a few short points about how an image of the Mexican frontier may have resonated with an American viewership at the time. Although situated at opposite ends of the social and intellectual spectrum, Roosevelt and Cody's 'Wild West' show shared a common discourse that viewed the progress of human civilization as racial evolution. White, Northern European societies were the cultural, political and racial pinnacle of human existence, while non-white, non-European cultures were subsequently deemed 'lesser' and placed further down the evolutionary scale and the scale of civilization. For both Roosevelt and Cody, the Western frontier was an arena in which the progress of white, American civilization was writ large through manliness, rugged individualism, hard work, and justified conflict.⁵⁶ The central character of this frontier was the cowboy, exulted in dime novels, 'Wild West' shows, and Roosevelt's own western past as a rancher, conservationist, and historian.⁵⁷ Although the Western frontier was closed in the latter decades of the 19th century, the popularity of dime novels, 'Wild West' shows, and the cowboy had enabled the idea of the frontier to become a 'mythic' space in the American imagination.⁵⁸ This 'mythic' space of the West, as Slotkin terms it, allowed the drama and imaginary of the American

frontier to be played out wherever American interests were at stake, whether the quasi-historical reenactments of the Indian Wars in Cody's 'Wild West' show or the charge of Roosevelt's predominantly Western, cowboy brigade, the 'Rough Riders' up San Juan Hill. This 'mythic' space of the frontier informed historical events, while historical events, in turn, drew from and contributed to the myth of the frontier. As Slotkin notes, the title 'Rough Riders' was used in dime novels and Cody's 'Wild West' show in the 1880s and early 1890s long before Roosevelt used the name for his military brigade.⁵⁹

Likewise, Cody's 'Wild West' show, responded to historical events by replacing the reenactment 'Custer's Last Stand' with the Battle of San Juan Hill and scenes from the Filipino insurgency in 1899, thus perpetuating the idea that the American 'frontier' was, indeed, anywhere American ideals and interests were contested.⁶⁰ If, as Slotkin has demonstrated, that things both highbrow, such as Roosevelt's political theories, as well as lowbrow like Cody's 'Wild West' show and dime novels shared a common cultural resonance in regard to ideas of the West and the American frontier, then it is entirely reasonable to posit that readers of the *Ladies' home journal* and *Scribner's* shared in this cultural currency when they viewed the Armour Chicken Tamale ads. In fact, images of the West and the Spanish-American War were foremost in January 1899 when *Scribner's* serialized Theodore Roosevelt's first-hand account of the 'Rough Riders' and placed Roosevelt on its cover.⁶¹ That readers were able to make the association between Mexico, the Western frontier, and new American frontiers abroad heralded by the Spanish-American War not only positioned the tamale as a novel foodstuff, it also made the tamale one of the fruits of an expanding American empire.

Conclusion

Looking at the ads as a whole, the ad images for the Armour Chicken Tamale have very little to do with the tamale as a food. Rather, it is marketed as experience: it is eaten by an American woman at a beachside house; exchanged by a Mexican couple; and purchased in an open-air market by a sombrero-wearing, serape-clad vaquero. Although this selling strategy is not in any way unique, it is important in revealing the imaginative geographies associated with the tamale as an ethnic food at the close of the 19th century. The ad copy not only rhetorically constructs the meaning of the tamale but the images equally represent and construct the ways the tamale is made to mean as an ethnic food – more specifically, a *Mexican* food.

As other scholars have noted, ethnic food has provided a point of cultural contact in American diets.⁶² Food, however, is a unique form of appropriating the Other in comparison to purchasing an exotic piece of furniture – for example, a Turkish lamp – or the latest French fashion. Food is not a static object, for food can be not only merely be bought, it can be prepared, shared with others, consumed, and incorporated into the fabric of daily life in way that an Oriental vase or rug cannot. At once a mundane part of daily life, food can also be marketed as experience, making it a powerful – if only temporary – indicator of curiosity and desire.⁶³ Although used to 'entertain difference' and create geographical knowledges about place as much as foreign items, pictures of faraway places, and travel writing, food in many ways is more subversive because of the very social, bodily, and intimate nature

of eating.⁶⁴ Food can, indeed, be a 'hot' or circumspect item in the domestic setting, as Susan Stewart suggests of all foreign objects.⁶⁵ It can equally be insidious and subtle, as simple as a bottle of olive oil, box of tea or pasta in the cupboard, as opposed to the openly displayed foreign *objet d'art* or, for example, in a 19th-century domestic setting, the rather large and cumbersome 'Turkish corner'.

What is not subtle, however, is the ease in which the Armour Chicken Tamale as an ethnic food was entangled in the discourses of imperialism through consumer culture and advertising. In short, the ads politicize both the domestic commodity of the tamale and its representations. As McClintock argues, the commodity spectacle of advertising, through its representations of foreign countries and races 'could package, market and distribute evolutionary racism on a hitherto unimagined scale'.⁶⁶ Political, racial, and cultural questions were domesticated and brought into the home by the advertising image and its context – in this case, middle class magazines.⁶⁷ Evoking ideas of cultural difference and imperialism, the ads force the articulation of American national identity and questions of how much 'at-homeness' one can maintain when confronted with images (and products) of the foreign.⁶⁸ As a result, questions of American identity and notions of the foreign Other are explored and resolved through what McClintock describes as 'the metaphoric transformation of imperial time into consumer space – imperial progress consumed at a glance as domestic spectacle'.⁶⁹

Racial and gender hierarchies, as well as concepts of nation and nationality, are constructed in all of the Armour Chicken Tamale ads, each using established stereotypes and imaginative geographies of Mexico already in existence in other literary mediums, such as novels, travel literature, and popular magazines. The timeless, innocent pastoral ideal of one ad evokes what Rosaldo terms 'imperialist nostalgia' for a passing or older way of life that modernity and imperialism are in the process of destroying (Figure 1). In Figure 2, conflicts of empire and class are ameliorated through intimations of love, regard, and service typical of cross-racial love stories and romance, while questions of colonial labor and economies are elided by the leisurely and privileged setting of an upper class, beachside home. The final ad supplants the peaceful and leisurely ideals of earlier ads with an image of Mexico as part of the 'wild frontier' (Figure 3).

Although the ads overwhelmingly rely upon two-dimensional, 'stock' characters of Mexicans, these stereotypes nonetheless accomplished important geopolitical work. Most obviously, they contributed to stereotypes that were already in existence. More importantly, however, they placed these stereotypes in a new cultural context – advertising and consumer culture – in a way that at once resonated with and justified the political positioning and articulation of white, racial hegemony and US imperialism during the Spanish-American War. Attitudes towards Mexico, its peoples, and the tamale are consumed 'at a glance' through the commodity spectacle of advertising and 'at a bite' as the commodity itself, thereby transforming a product of a 'backward' and 'lesser' culture – the tamale – into a food that was re-contextualized and ultimately, redefined by advertising and the dictates of American empire.

In her article on mid-19th century geography, travel, and photography, Schwartz notes that photographs 'were employed as visual truth to forge, validate, confirm, shape and perpetuate ideas of place, space, time, self and the Other. Geographers must look behind the mask of documentary neutrality to explore the ways in which photographs, like travel, served to conquer space, enshrine cultural difference, and push back the frontiers of the geographical

imagination?⁷⁰ Although arguing for the particularity of photography in the 19th-century imagination, I think her statements, however, can be more broadly applied to other visual modes. Advertising, whether illustration or photography, is a visual form that has maintained a significant and pervasive cultural presence in the modern world. In the line drawings of 19th-century tamale advertising or modern day photographs advertising coffee or tourist destinations, certain geographical knowledges associated with Mexico emerge. Although I have only discussed a few of these imaginative geographies, they are deeply rooted in 19th century discourses of difference and otherness – some of which still color the American view of Mexico today. That these geographical knowledges are intimately entangled with advertising and consumer culture makes the placement and marketing of the tamale by the Armour Meat Packing Company neither insignificant nor inconsequential, for it is in the images of daily life that the forgotten histories of the cultural and political are read and given meaning.

Biographical note

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Notes

¹ 'The variety championship', *Armco magazine* (November 1913), p. 12.

² *Ibid.*, p. 12.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁴ The city of Momence, Illinois is located, roughly, 66 miles southeast of Joliet, Illinois and 140 miles northwest of Indianapolis, Indiana. The population in 1910 was 2201 and by 1920 it had increased to 2218. US Census Bureau, *Fourteenth census of the United States taken in the year 1920, vol. 1* (Washington, US Government Printing Office, 1921), p. 201.

⁵ P. Crang, 'Displacement, consumption, and identity', *Environment and planning A* 28 (1996), p. 56.

⁶ K. Hoganson, *Consumers' imperium: the global production of American domesticity, 1865–1920* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina, 2007), p. 14.

⁷ Hispanic division, Library of Congress, 'Chronology', from the website 'The world of 1898: the Spanish-American War'. Available online at: <http://www.loc.gov/rr/hispanic/1898/chronology.html> [accessed 15/10/07].

⁸ G. González, *Culture of empire: American writers, Mexico, and Mexican immigrants, 1880–1930* (Austin, University of Texas, 2004); S. Streeby, *American sensations: class, empire, and the production of popular culture* (Berkeley, University of California, 2002).

⁹ The Armour Chicken Tamale ads first came to my attention as part of a larger project analyzing how early advertising images represented women and food. In a survey of all advertising from the *Ladies' home journal* for volume 16 (about 2500 ads), the Armour Chicken Tamale ads were the only advertising images that showed non-white women involved in food production and the only product that clearly billed itself as a foreign or ethnic food. Because the Armour tamale ads appear to represent important 'firsts' in *Ladies' home journal* in terms of depicting the first images of not only Mexicans and *mestizos* but also ethnic food, I decided to perform close readings of the tamale ads and relate the images to larger discourses of race and imperialism at the close of the 19th century.

- 'Extract of Beef' ad, *Ladies' home journal*, November 1898, p. 48. 'Vigoral Concentrated Beef' ad, *Ladies' home journal*, January 1899, p. 32. 'Pork and Beans' ad, *Ladies' home journal*, April 1899, p. 37. 'Pork and Beans' ad, *Ladies' home journal*, May 1899, p. 34. 'Pork and Beans' ad, *Ladies' home journal*, June 1899, p. 44. 'Pork and Beans' ad, *Ladies' home journal*, July 1899, p. 41. 'Star Brand Mince Meat' ad, *Ladies' home journal*, October 1899, p. 46.
- ¹⁰ J. Pilcher, *¡Que vivan los tamales! Food and the making of Mexican identity* (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 1998). Ruiz also explores this shifting interest in creating a uniquely Mexican, as opposed to Spanish, New World identity in the *India Bonita* beauty pageants of the 1920s. A. Ruiz, "La India Bonita": National beauty in revolutionary Mexico', *Cultural dynamics* 14 (2002), pp. 283–301.
- ¹¹ H. Levenstein, *Revolution at the table: the transformation of the American diet* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 10–13; Pilcher, *¡Que vivan!*, pp. 63–5.
- ¹² Pilcher, *¡Que vivan!*, pp. 56–7.
- ¹³ G. Atherton, *The Californians* (Ridgewood, NJ, Gregg Press, 1968 [1898]), p. 334; L. Harby, 'Texan types and contrasts', *Harper's*, July 1890, pp. 229–46; R. Hartt, 'The Montanians', *The Atlantic monthly*, June 1898, pp. 737–48.
- ¹⁴ J. London, *The iron heel* (Chicago, Lawrence Hill Books, 1981 [1907]), p. 128; Hartt, 'The Montanians', p. 743.
- ¹⁵ Atherton, *The Californians*, p. 334; F. Norris, *McTeague: a story of San Francisco* (New York, WW Norton and Co., 1997 [1899]), pp. 7, 64.
- ¹⁶ Harby, 'Texan types', p. 229.
- ¹⁷ Pilcher, *¡Que vivan!*, pp. 54–6.
- ¹⁸ Norris, *McTeague*, pp. 54–5, 66–8, 111–12.
- ¹⁹ J. London, *The valley of the moon* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1999 [1913]), pp. 84, 152–3.
- ²⁰ K. Chopin, *The awakening* (New York, W. W. Norton and Co., 1994 [1899]), p. 41.
- ²¹ Norris, *McTeague*, pp. 111–12.
- ²² Hartt, 'The Montanians', p. 743.
- ²³ J. May, "'A little taste of something more exotic': the imaginative geographies of everyday life", *Geography* 81(1996), p. 59.
- ²⁴ I. Cook and P. Crang, 'The world on a plate: culinary culture, displacement and geographical knowledges', *Journal of material culture* 1 (1996), p. 138.
- ²⁵ Hartt, 'The Montanians', p. 741.
- ²⁶ R. Pillsbury, *No foreign food: the American diet in time and place* (Boulder, CO, Westview Press, 1998), pp. 227–8; Donald Ross, personal communication.
- ²⁷ Pilcher, *¡Que vivan!*, p. 46.
- ²⁸ F. Smith, *A white umbrella in Mexico* (New York, Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1889), p. 40. Smith describes a mestizo couple: 'The poverty of the pair was unmistakable. A straw sombrero, cotton shirt, trousers, and sandals completed his outfit, a chemise, blue skirt, scarlet sash, and rebozo twisted about her throat her own. This humble raiment was clean and fresh, and the red rose tucked coquetishly among the braids of her purple-black hair was just what was wanted to make it picturesque'.
- ²⁹ R. Williams, *The country and the city* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1973); R. Rosaldo, 'Imperialist nostalgia', *Representations* 26 (1989), pp. 107–22.
- ³⁰ Williams, *The country and the city*, p. 297.
- ³¹ Rosaldo, 'Imperialist nostalgia', pp. 107–8.
- ³² Charles Dudley Warner, writing for *Harper's* in 1887, describes peasants' huts as being thatched with walls made 'very likely of cane'. C. Warner, 'Mexican notes', *Harper's*, May 1887, p. 956. Another American living in Mexico at this time, Fanny Chambers Gooch, describes abode and larger Spanish-style architecture. F. Gooch, *Face to face with the Mexicans* (Carbondale, IL, Southern Illinois University Press, 1966 [1887]), pp. 5–11.

- 33 M. Pratt, *Imperial eyes: travel writing and transculturation* (New York, Routledge, 1992), pp. 112–15.
- 34 A. Castañeda, 'The political economy of nineteenth century stereotypes of Californianas', in Del Castillo, ed., *Between borders: essays on Mexicana/Chicana history* (Encino CA, Floricanto Press, 1990), pp. 213–36; A. Castañeda, 'Gender, race, and culture: Spanish-Mexican women in the historiography of frontier California', *Frontiers* 11 (1990), pp. 8–20; D. González, *Refusing the favor: the Spanish-Mexican women of Santa Fe, 1820–1880* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1999); A. Kaplan, *The anarchy of empire in the making of US culture* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2002), pp. 1–12.
- 35 Sanborn, *A winter in Central America and Mexico* (Boston, IL Lee and Shepard, 1886), p. 310.
- 36 The woman is wearing a corset and shirt-waist typical of American fashions of the late 19th century. See L. Banner, *American beauty* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1983), pp. 148–50. A description of male dress from the Mexican upper classes is seen in H. Sanborn, *A winter in Central America and Mexico*, p. 241. She writes: 'The most noticeable of all the crowd was a handsome looking young Mexican, in a riding suit, presenting an appearance elegant enough to make our greatest 'swells' green with envy. With a rich dark complexion, a fine form, and manly bearing, his natural beauty was further enhanced by his dress, which was most elegant and showy, and consisted of a sombrero of drab felt, with an enormously wide brim and a rich trimming with of silver; a jacket and vest of spotless white, elaborately embroidered; and trousers of fine black cloth, with rows of silver buttons on the seam from top to bottom. An enormous pistol, and a display of jewelry, completed his elegant toilet, and enhanced the fine appearance of which he was fully conscious, as well as of the admiration which he excited'.
- 37 The woman is wearing a corset and shirt-waist typical of American fashions of the late 19th century. See L. Banner, *American beauty* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1983), pp. 148–50.
- 38 Sanborn, *A winter in Central America and Mexico*, p. 241.
- 39 M. Townsend, *Here and there in Mexico: the travel writings of Mary Ashley Townsend* (Tuscaloosa, AL, University of Alabama Press, 2001), p. 138.
- 40 Gooch, *Face to face with the Mexicans*, pp. 160–1.
- 41 Pratt, *Imperial eyes*, p. 100.
- 42 Pratt, *Imperial eyes*, p. 97.
- 43 *Ibid.*, p. 97.
- 44 *Ibid.*, pp. 97–101.
- 45 S. Porter, 'And that it is custom makes it law: class conflict and gender ideology in the public sphere, Mexico City, 1880–1910', *Social science history* 24 (2000), p. 143, footnote 10.
- 46 A. Deck, "'Now then – who said biscuits?': the black woman cook as fetish in American advertising, 1905–1953", in S. Inness, ed., *Kitchen culture in America: popular representations of food, gender, and race* (Philadelphia, PA, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), pp. 69–93.
- 47 *Scribner's Magazine Advertiser*, December 1898, January–December 1899. *Ladies' home journal*, December 1898–December 1899.
- 48 Deck, 'Now then – who said biscuits?', p. 90.
- 49 *Ibid.*, pp. 69–93.
- 50 G. Keller, 'The first decades: types of characters', *Bilingual review* 18 (1993), pp. 37–69.
- 51 *Ibid.*, pp. 37–69; P. Stanfield, 'The western 1909–14: a cast of villains', *Film history* 1 (1987), pp. 97–112.
- 52 J. Limón, 'Tex-sex-Mex: American identities, lone stars, and the politics of racialized sexuality', *American literary history* 9 (1997), p. 598; *Fights of nations*, American Mutoscope and Biograph Company, 1907. Library of Congress, 'The American Variety Stage: Vaudeville and Popular Entertainment, 1870–1920 collection'. Available online at: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/vshtml/vsfmlst.html>; A. De León, *They called them greasers: Anglo attitudes toward Mexicans in Texas, 1821–1900* (Austin, University of Texas, 1983). Sanborn, *A winter in Central America and Mexico*, p. 228.
- 53 M. Foote, 'A diligence journey in Mexico', *The century*, November 1881, p. 7.

- ⁵⁴ Keller, 'The first decades: types of characters', pp. 37–69; Stanfield, 'The western 1909–14', pp. 97–112.
- ⁵⁵ R. Slotkin, *Gunfighter nation: the myth of the frontier in twentieth-century America* (New York, Atheneum, 1992), pp. 29–87.
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 29–87.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 36–8.
- ⁵⁸ R. Slotkin, 'Buffalo Bill's "Wild West" and the mythologization of the American empire', in A. Kaplan and D. Pease, eds, *Cultures of United States imperialism* (Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 1993), p. 166.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p.172.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 176, 178.
- ⁶¹ *Scribner's*, January 1899, cover. T. Roosevelt, 'The Rough Riders: raising the regiment', *Scribner's*, January 1899, pp. 2–20.
- ⁶² D. Garbaccia, *We are what we eat: ethnic food and the making of Americans* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1998), pp. 93–122; K. Hoganson, 'Food and entertainment from every corner of the globe: bourgeois US households as points of encounter, 1870–1920', *Amerikastudien* 48 (2003), pp. 115–35; Cook and Crang, 'The world on a plate', pp. 131–53; May, 'A little taste of something more exotic', pp. 57–64.
- ⁶³ May, 'A little taste of something more exotic', pp. 57–64.
- ⁶⁴ K. Hoganson, 'Food and entertainment', p. 125
- ⁶⁵ S. Stewart, *On longing: narratives of the miniature, the gigantic, the souvenir, the collection* (Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 1993), p. 148.
- ⁶⁶ McClintock, *Imperial leather*, p. 209.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 207–26.
- ⁶⁸ A. Kaplan, 'Manifest domesticity', *American literature* 70 (1998), pp. 581–2.
- ⁶⁹ McClintock, *Imperial leather*, p. 214.
- ⁷⁰ J. Schwartz, "'The geography lesson": photographs and the construction of imaginative geographies', *Journal of historical geography* 22 (1996), p. 35.